



**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
WELSH PARLIAMENT BRANCH EXECUTIVE**

**REPORT TO THE SENEDD BRANCH FOR THE PERIOD
10 December 2024-28 February 2026**

Background

The Welsh Parliament unanimously agreed a motion signed by the four party leaders to apply for admission to membership of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) on 7 July 1999. Wales was formally welcomed into the CPA at the General Assembly meeting in Trinidad on 19 September 1999.

Branch Structure

All Members of the Senedd are by default Members of the CPA Senedd/Wales Branch

Office Holders:

President: Elin Jones MS

Vice President: David Rees MS

Chair: Rhun ap Iorwerth MS

Secretary: Manon Antoniazzi,
Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd

Acting Secretary:

Al Davies, Senior International Relations & Protocol Manager

Branch Executive Committee

Rhianon Passmore MS

Alun Davies MS

Natasha Asghar MS

Sam Rowlands MS

Delyth Jewell MS

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

This report covers a longer than usual period, due to the forthcoming Senedd elections. It represents what has been one the busiest times for the Branch with the highlight undoubtedly being our hosting, for the first time in over a decade, the British Islands and Mediterranean Regional (BIMR) Conference.

The BIMR Conference, over three glorious days in June 2025, saw us welcome the majority of the Region's legislatures as well as international observers to Cardiff. A notable outcome of the conference was the launch, at the Senedd, of the BIMR LGBT+ Network; a first for any of the CPA's Nine Regions.

Other highlights includes our participation in the Regional Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conferences in both Scotland and Northern Ireland; the CWP Workshop in the Bahamas; the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Barbados; the Regional Parliamentarians with Disabilities Forum in Scotland, and as invited observers at the Canadian Regional Conference in Quebec City.

We were delighted to secure representation at the "*Role of Parliaments in Responsible Artificial Intelligence*" Conference in Malaysia. This past year also saw the Branch play an important role in Election Observer Missions in the Cayman Islands and the Falkland Islands, with the latter mission being led by a Senedd Branch Member, for the first time.

Looking ahead, the coming months offers the opportunity for our Branch to be involved in numerous conferences, including our Regional Conference in Gibraltar as well as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Cape Town, South Africa. It will also see the Senedd officially take its seat on the CPA's influential International Executive Committee.

As I stand down, after almost a decade as Chair of the Senedd's CPA Branch, I reflect on what has not only been a very rewarding experience for me personally, but also as a time of pride for the Branch. Pride in the robust governance which is now in place and which continues to evolve, to ensure enhanced and widely shared opportunities for our Members, whilst providing a platform to showcase the Senedd on the international stage.

I am grateful to all the Member who have engaged with, and benefitted from, the opportunities presented through our membership of the CPA. I have no doubt that the CPA will remain an important network for the Senedd and our Members during the Seventh Senedd, and beyond.

Rhun ap Iorwerth MS. CPA Senedd Branch Chair.

SELECTED ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN.

BIMR Conferences

*54th BIMR Conference,
Senedd, Wales
June 2025*

The Senedd was delighted to host the BIM Regional Conference, the first time it had done so since 2014.

As the sun shone on Cardiff Bay, we welcomed over 50 Delegates to Wales, representing the majority of the Region's Branches, as well as international observers from the National Assembly of Quebec and the Western Cape Provincial Parliament.

The three day conference, on the theme of "*Addressing the Needs of a Modern Parliament*" examined topics including the *Welsh Youth Parliament Experience, the Importance of LGBT+ Voices in Parliament and Supporting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Parliamentarians*. The conference which included the participation of over a dozen Members of the Senedd received overwhelmingly positive feedback. It provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the best of the Senedd whilst offering a flavour of Wales and our renowned hospitality, to our international guests. [Report](#)

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (BIMR / CWP International)

*11th BIMR CWP Conference
Edinburgh, Scotland
March 2025*

The Senedd Branch was represented by Rhianon Passmore MS, Natasha Asghar MS and Sioned Williams MS at the Regional Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference, hosted by the CPA Scotland Branch. The theme of the conference was "*A Parliament for All: the Importance of Women in Politics*" [Report](#)

12th BIMR CWP Conference
Belfast, Northern Ireland
February 2026

Rhianon Passmore MS and Sioned Williams MS represented the Senedd at this Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Regional Conference, hosted by the Northern Ireland Assembly in Stormont. The theme of the Conference was "*Power and Peace: Protecting Our Mental Health in Public Life*" Official Report in development. [Link to CPA Secretariat Article](#)

[CWP Workshop](#)
[Nassau, The Bahamas](#)
April/May 2025

Sioned Williams MS represented the Senedd at this CWP Workshop, the theme of which was "Parliamentarians as Drivers of Women's Economic Empowerment" [Report](#)

Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD)

Mark Isherwood MS, as the Senedd's Champion on Parliamentarians with Disabilities, has continued to lead on the Senedd's engagement with the CPwD network.

In February 2026 Mark Isherwood MS represented the Senedd at the **Inaugural BIMR CPwD Forum**, hosted by the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. Further details of the Forum can be found [here](#). (Link to CPA Secretariat Article).

LGBT+ Parliamentarians (BIMR LGBT+)

The BIMR LGBT+ Network was launched at the Regional Conference in Cardiff in June 2025, a source of great pride to the Senedd.

The network, whilst in its infancy, has been very active. The Steering Committee, with Adam Price MS as its interim Chair and in which Hannah Blythyn is a Member, has met frequently and in November 2025 a first in-person Forum was held in Westminster. The programme examined the key themes of: "*The Visibility of LGBT+ people in politics across the BIM Region*" and "*the Status of LGBT+ equality across the wider Commonwealth*"

An article by Adam Price MS, reflecting on the Forum, can be read [here](#).

Election Observation Missions (EOM)

Alun Davies MS participated in the April/May 2025 EOM to the Cayman Islands ([Final Report](#)) and led the Mission to the Falkland Islands in December 2025. Links to [First Finding and preliminary statement](#)

Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference

[68th CPC,](#)

[Bridgetown, Barbados](#)

[October 2025](#)

Natasha Asghar MS and Alun Davies MS represented the Senedd at the 2025 CPC. The Conference, attended by over 500 parliamentarians from across the CPA's Nine Regions, saw the Senedd transition onto the CPA's International Executive Committee. [Report](#)

[73rd Westminster Seminar](#)

[March 2025](#)

The Branch was represented by James Evans MS at the Westminster Seminar – the CPA UK's Flagship annual programme aimed at new or recently elected Members and developing Clerks.

Other notable Conferences, Seminars and Workshops.

[61st Canada Regional Conference](#)

[Quebec City](#)

[July 2025](#)

Branch Vice-President, David Rees MS represented the Senedd at the CPA Canada Regional Conference. The Conference provided an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of developments in Wales, as well as to forge new and strengthen existing relations between the Senedd and several Canadian legislatures. [Report](#)

["The Role of Parliaments in Shaping the Future of Responsible AI" Conference
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
November 2025](#)

Adam Price MS and Hannah Blythyn MS were selected as the Senedd's delegates to attend this conference, hosted by the Parliament of Malaysia, in partnership with the CPA, IPU and UNDP. [Report](#)

Notable visits.

The Llywydd hosted official visits to the Senedd by the following Commonwealth Speakers, during this reporting period.

*Speaker of the Australian Senate (federal) President Sue Lines
Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Council, President Ben Franklin
Speaker of the Queensland Parliament, the Hon Pat Weir MP*

The Branch has also been pleased to develop programmes for Speakers, Members, Delegations and High Commissioners representing a number of Commonwealth Parliaments, including India, Canada, New Zealand and Malta.

Looking ahead in 2026

- 55th [BIM Regional Conference, Gibraltar](#) (17-20 June)
- 13th [Commonwealth Youth Parliament, NSW \(Australia\)](#) (27-31 July)
- 68th [Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Cape Town, South Africa](#) (13-18 September)

February 2026